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UNCLAS BRATISLAVA 000823

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC ECONOMIC RELATIONS

REF: STATE 167813

Sensitive but unclassified - handle accordingly

1. (SBU) Promoting transatlantic economic ties has been a dominant theme at Embassy Bratislava for several years. As a result of the GOS's sweeping economic reforms and improving investment climate, trade and investment between our two countries are up markedly. Post has hosted large business conferences in each of the past three years with attendance of dozens of American and European companies as well as several USG and GOS officials. The AmCham, Slovak business organizations, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies have all been active in promoting closer economic cooperation.

2. (SBU) Per ref A, post would like to suggest the following activities to further the cause of strengthening transatlantic economic ties.

a) Provide speakers for AmCham events. The AmCham in Slovakia welcomes USG, GOS and other stakeholder speakers at its (well-attended) breakfast meetings to discuss improving/expanding transatlantic economic relations. It has also been in discussions with the AmChams in Prague and Budapest to sponsor the trip of a high profile business leader to discuss these same issues. Reportedly, the three AmChams have the funding available to pay for this.

b) Provide speakers to high school and universities. Emboffs have been invited to be guest speakers by two local business schools to discuss transatlantic business issues.

c) Organize/participate in conferences. Post is in discussions with Embassy Warsaw to organize a regional conference for the pharmaceutical industry to combat IPR violations and other inequities that are prevalent in Central Europe.

d) Emboffs have been invited to be presenters at the 2005 Bratislava Automotive Business Conference.

3.(U) Outside of ref A's guidelines, post also foresees participation, or recommends USG participation in the following events.

e) Foreign Minister Kukan plans to travel to Los Angeles in November for the opening of the Slovak Consulate. He reportedly wants to promote business ties during his trip.

f) Prime Minister Dzurinda plans to visit California in 2005 to promote business ties between Slovakia and the U.S.

4. (U) Post's POCs are Econoff David Nobles and PAO Barbara Zigli. Weiser

NNNN